

Frequently Asked Questions About Permitting

> **When is a permit required?**

Appropriate permits are required for any new construction, reconstruction, alteration, repair, movement to another site, removal or demolition of any building. Permits are required for the installation, extension, alteration or general repair of electrical, mechanical or plumbing systems. Permits are required to be grouped by the particular project and paid for by the general contractor or the homeowner acting as their own general contractor. Separate permits are required for building, electrical, heating, air conditioning and plumbing work.

EXCEPTION FOR SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENCE: Permits are not required for any work costing five thousand dollars or less, unless the work involves:

- The addition, repair, or replacement of load bearing structures;
- The addition or change in the design of a plumbing system;
- The addition, replacement or change in the design of a heating or air conditioning system;
- The addition, replacement or change in the design of an electrical system;
- The use of materials not permitted by the code;
- The addition of roofing, excluding replacement of like grade fire resistance material.

Our list of [Frequently Called Numbers](#) will guide you to phone numbers of those involved in the permitting process. Also see our [Plans Submittal Requirements](#) for additional information regarding the land development and construction processes.

> **Do I need plan review for a move-on building permit?**

Effective March 1, 2008, move-on permits require plan review. See more information [here](#).

> **I live in the town of Matthews. Do I need a permit to open, construct, reconstruct, alter, or relocate my driveway?**

Subsection (A) of the section 95.40 of the Matthews Town Ordinance reads: "Except as otherwise provided in this section, no person may open, construct, reconstruct, alter, or relocate any driveway across any public sidewalk or into any Town maintained street, or cut any curb for such purpose without having obtained a written permit from the Town Engineer or his designee." You can obtain a permit from the Matthews Public Works Department (704-847-3640).

> **How do I determine what costs to include on my building permit?**

The following represents typical examples of costs to be included on Building Permit Applications:

- Design and costs associated with construction plans and specifications
- All building construction costs, including soil exploration, excavation, backfill, compaction, shoring deep foundations and shallow foundations
- Fixed or built-in equipment, including mechanical, electrical and plumbing (including kitchen equipment, elevators or lift equipment)
- Special inspections and structural tests
- Interior and exterior finishes
- Fire protections systems
- Graphics/signage
- Costs in place: including material, labor and equipment

- Overhead, profit and taxes

The following represents typical examples of costs which are not included on Building Permit Applications:

- Non fixed equipment such as furniture, furnishings (window treatments) and portable equipment
- Site improvements

> What is the cost of a permit?

View the [fee schedule](#) to determine the cost of a permit.

NOTE: Additional Zoning Fees may apply. See [schedule](#).

Demolition Permit

For the permit, add the "Additional" fee to the "Per Structure" base for each structure with more than the NESHAP regulated amount of asbestos.

Size Sq. Ft.	Per Structure	Additional**
Less than 500	\$113.00	\$0.00
500 to 4,999	\$451.00	\$347.00
5,000 to 9,999	\$677.00	\$347.00
10,000 and above	\$846.00	\$347.00
Demolition means the wrecking or taking out of any load-supporting structural member of a facility together with any related handling operations or the intentional burning of any facility.		

Renovations

Renovation means altering a facility or one or more facility components in any way, including the stripping or removal of Regulated Asbestos-Containing Material (RACM) from a facility component.

For all renovations (includes NESHAP notification, if applicable) - \$347.00

[top](#)

> Where do I go to get a permit?

Permits are obtained by the property owner or owner's agent from the Code Enforcement Department located at 700 North Tryon Street, Charlotte, N.C. The department's operating hours are Monday - Friday, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Applications for electrical, mechanical, and plumbing permits may be mailed. Contractors with an established account may submit residential permits and commercial permits for small jobs from our [website](#).

> When does a permit expire?

Permits expire six (6) months (180 days) after issue date if no work has commenced. Permits also expire when work has started but discontinued for twelve (12) months (365 days) from the last inspection date.

> What is a Land Use Bond and when is a bond needed?

Persons, firms or corporations engaged in construction, installation, maintenance, alteration or repair for which a permit is required, must file a continuous surety or cash bond to guarantee payment of fees and charges as well as indemnify municipalities against loss in the performance of duties for any damage to sewer or water pipes, or streets or sidewalks in the municipality.

Anyone doing work within the corporate limits of the City of Charlotte and in Mecklenburg County is required to post a cash/surety bond. The minimum amount of the bond will be \$1,000 for work in the County only or \$2,000 for work inside the City of Charlotte corporate limits or for both the City and County. Bonds may be cancelled upon 30 days written notice and zero liability.

[Bond forms](#) can be printed from this web site, picked up at the Revenue Collection counter, or faxed if you call 704-336-3801.

> When is a N. C. State General Contractor License required?

Any contracted work which exceeds \$30,000 per project.

> When are sealed plans required?

Plans and specifications sealed by a licensed architect or registered engineer are required for any new building, building addition or alteration to an existing building, with the exception of one or two family dwellings. Plans are reviewed within the department and by other City and County agencies as required. Plan Review personnel are available to assist you with plan requirements. See our [Plans Submittal Requirements](#) for additional information regarding the land development and construction processes.

> How is my work inspected?

Inspectors will check to make sure that work is done according to code. Contractors or homeowners doing their own work must call to arrange for each inspection. Call 704-336-8000 to arrange for inspections through the department's automated touchtone phone system. This system can be used to request inspections, obtain inspection results, cancel an inspection, determine project plan review status, check the status of a certificate of occupancy and to obtain general department information. Or see our list of [Frequently Called Numbers](#) to call directly to the trade clerk.

> Where can I obtain a copy of the Building Code?

The Building Code is available from the North Carolina Department of Insurance. Please call 919-661-5880 to order or visit their [website](#).